

# OUR TOWN

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS

MARCH 2011



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## LAWNS AND MEADOWS BY THE NUMBERS

### LAWN

57,000

Gallons of Water

670

Pounds of Yard Waste

80

Hours of Maintenance



### MEADOW

6,000

Gallons of Water

250

Pounds of Yard Waste

15

Hours of Maintenance



## From Lawn to Meadow

What did this land look like before it was developed?" That was the question Los Altos Hills resident Kit Gordon posed her neighbors after acquiring a hilltop property adorned with a fenced asphalt tennis court. "They said it was a meadow," Gordon recalled the conversation with long-time residents Art Lachenbruch and Hill Reiser. She took that as a guiding principle in redesigning the five acres on which her family lives. [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2]

Seven years ago Gordon's vision was not common, but now Los Altos Hills residents are at the forefront of a growing movement that is transforming residential landscaping in ways that are both environmentally friendly and aesthetically pleasing. This is especially relevant in our Town, where acre-sized parcels and lush landscaping make our community on average among the biggest residential users of water in the state. In addition, large verdant lawns, non-native plants, and extravagant landscaping require high maintenance and fertilizer use.

There is a major financial incentive as well: savings from climate-suitable landscaping are significant and come

## Native Garden Plants

Try some of these plants and see your garden come alive with movement and color:

- Berkeley sedge (*Carex tumulicola*)
- California fescue (*Festuca californica*)
- California meadow sedge (*Carex pansa*)
- Deer grass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*)
- Foothill needlegrass (*Nassella lepida*)
- Idaho fescue (*Festuca idahoensis*)
- Purple needlegrass (*Nassella pulchra*)
- Red fescue (*Festuca rubra*)



evolution ideally suited to local soil and rain conditions. What's more, native plants form the natural habitat for local insects, birds, and other wildlife, in contrast to the displacement of local species that results from suburban landscaping and development.

## Lawn Replacement Rebate

Currently, the Santa Clara Valley Water District offers a rebate to homeowners, businesses, and schools for replacing turf grass lawns with drought-tolerant plants. Some grasses are included in the approved plant list along with a variety of drought-tolerant plants. The rebate requires a pre-inspection and planning

**Traditional lawns are being replaced as people appreciate the value and the aesthetics of climate-suitable meadows, a choice that is more in harmony with our natural surroundings.**

on several levels. "I turn the irrigation off in October and turn it back on in June," Gordon said. Incredibly, even in the summer, the meadow is watered only once every several weeks. Furthermore, meadows of native plants are graced by non-stinging native bees, endangered butterflies, and hummingbirds.

Here are the main benefits of a meadow over a traditional lawn:

- Meadows require much less water than lawns, on average about 60–80% less.
- Meadows do not need any fertilizers, herbicides, or pesticides, thereby substantially improving water quality in our creeks and bay.
- Meadows need about 95% less mowing, sharply reducing air pollution, fossil-fuel consumption, and greenhouse gases.
- Less garden waste ends up in our landfills.
- Meadows provide habitat for local wildlife, like birds and beneficial insects.

- Costs will be reduced with less water and maintenance required. Some local residents estimate reducing their overall landscaping bill by \$400 per month.
- It is increasingly easy to transition a lawn as companies are now growing native sod that can be installed for an instant meadow.
- Children and pets enjoy the seasonality, variability, and interest of a biologically diverse habitat.

There are a number of resources to provide context and insight around the decision to remake your lawn, including neighbors and landscape architects with experience in the process, in addition to classes, books, and websites on the topic (see box at end of article).

## The Importance of Native Plants

Native plants are crucial to the successful transformation of turf lawns into meadows. These species are by dint of

before any changes are made. Please be sure to do your homework on this rebate before you remove your lawn to avoid disqualification. Find out more about the Landscape Rebate Program from the Santa Clara Valley Water District at: <http://www.scvwd.org/Programs/LandscapeRebateProgram.aspx>.

So, if you are interested in saving money, creating a beautiful yard, and making your home more sustainable, consider transitioning all or part of your lawn to a native meadow. Embrace the new by resurrectoring some of what has been lost.



### TO LEARN MORE:

Purissima Hills Water District customers can contact their specialist on water conservation programs and resources, Alexis Shields, at 650-948-1217 or [ashields@purissimawater.org](mailto:ashields@purissimawater.org). Cal Water customers can call 650-917-0152.

*The American Meadow Garden* by John Greenlee  
*California Native Plants for the Garden* by Carol Bornstein, David Fross, and Bart O'Brien

Websites: [acterra.org/findanswers/home/native\\_plants.html](http://acterra.org/findanswers/home/native_plants.html); [calwater.com/Conservation/](http://calwater.com/Conservation/); [cnps.org/](http://cnps.org/); [h2ouse.org/](http://h2ouse.org/); [purissimawater.org/conservation.html](http://purissimawater.org/conservation.html); [valleywater.org/programs/waterconservation.aspx](http://valleywater.org/programs/waterconservation.aspx)





DEAR FRIENDS:

For the past 16 years, it has been a joy contributing to the Community Relations Committee (CRC) and serving as Editor of the Town Newsletter. However, the time has come to pass the torch to a new, vibrant editorial team.

With my resignation, effective March 15, 2011, the production of *Our Town* will be the responsibility of a new editorial team, reporting to the LAH City Council and the City Manager. The new reporting relationship was approved by the Council at the January 13, 2011 meeting.



Glen Reed and Marita Seulamo-Vargas will head the new volunteer professional editorial team. Sarah Gualtieri, the Community Services Coordinator, will provide coordination of submissions. Alex Atkins, an award-winning local graphic designer, will continue to contract with the Town to design the newsletter and enhance *Our Town* as a preeminent community publication.

It has been a pleasure to serve with my fellow volunteers on the CRC team. The CRC makes significant contributions volunteering for the Town. I'm pleased to have been part of the team that initiated the Town Picnic and so many other wonderful events and programs. I encourage others to be involved in the CRC. It is very rewarding.

I know that *Our Town* will continue to thrive with the new reorganization and reporting relationship under the leadership of the City Council, City Manager, and Community Services Coordinator.

All good wishes,

Duffy

DUFFY PRICE

Editor, *Our Town*  
Member, Community Relations Committee,  
since 1994

FROM THE CITY MANAGER

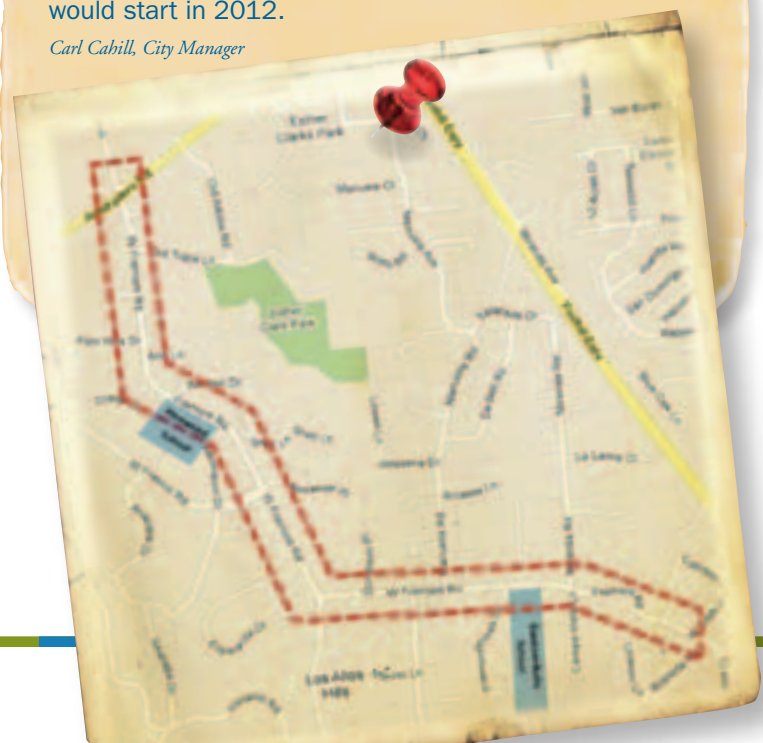
## Bike Lanes Under Consideration

Although the Town experiences a relatively high volume of bicycle traffic, there are virtually no bike lanes in Town. This is for two reasons. First, Town streets tend to be too narrow to accommodate dedicated bike lanes. Second, bike lanes are expensive to construct because there is usually some widening of existing pavement involved.

However, the Town is currently considering the feasibility of a bike lane on Fremont Road as a result of the reopening of Gardner Bullis School. The project would consist of widening a 1.7-mile segment of Fremont Road to create a six-foot bike lane in each direction of travel. Existing pedestrian pathways adjacent to the roadway would be preserved and relocated as necessary to maintain pedestrian corridors. The project is intended to address safety concerns and serve as an incentive for parents to encourage their schoolchildren to walk or bike to school, thereby reducing traffic congestion, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of the school.

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority has awarded the Town up to \$890,000 for the construction of bike lanes on Fremont Road, with a matching local share up to \$260,000. The development of plans and specifications is underway. Once preliminary plans are ready in late spring 2011, the Town will conduct at least one public hearing. If all goes well, construction would start in 2012.

Carl Cabill, City Manager



## FROM THE PLANNING DIRECTOR

In 2010, the Town issued 486 building permits with a total construction valuation of \$38,122,270. The following chart shows the number of major permits issued in 2010 compared with the previous year.

**BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED**

Type	2010	2009
New Residence	17	13
Addition	33	31
Interior Remodel	47	44
Secondary Dwelling Unit	5	5
Swimming Pool	19	23
Solar	58	48

**New Green Building Codes Go into Effect**

Starting January 1, 2011, all new residential construction will have to comply with the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen). CALGreen is a new

mandatory statewide building code established to reduce construction waste, make buildings more efficient in their use of materials and energy, and reduce environmental impact during and after construction.

In 2007, Governor Schwarzenegger directed the California Building Standards Commission to work on the adoption of green building standards for residential, commercial, and public building construction for the 2010 code adoption process. The code is intended to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve energy efficiency in every new building.

CALGreen does not affect home additions or remodels; however, CALGreen does require new residence projects to:

- Reduce indoor water use by 20 percent.

- Divert 50 percent of construction waste from landfills.
- Install low pollutant-emitting interior finish materials such as paints, carpet, vinyl flooring, and particle board.

In addition to complying with CALGreen, the Town also adopted a green building ordinance in 2008 that requires all new residential projects to achieve the minimum rating under Build It Green's Green-Point Rated or USGBC's LEED for Homes programs.

A copy of the 2010 California Green Building Standards Code can be found at <http://www.bsc.ca.gov/CALGreen/greencode.htm>. For more information about green building regulations in Los Altos Hills, please contact the Building Department at 650-947-2501.

*Debbie Pedro, Planning Director*

## There's A New Sheriff in Town



Would you trust the safety of your town to a man who has scaled the sheer rock face of Yosemite's Half Dome? Now you can. At the turn of the year, Captain Carl Neusel, a rock climbing enthusiast, succeeded Captain Terry Calderone in overseeing law enforcement in Los Altos Hills.

By early June, Neusel's credits will be further boosted by participation in the FBI National Academy, an intensive 10-week program for selected law enforcement managers from all over the world.

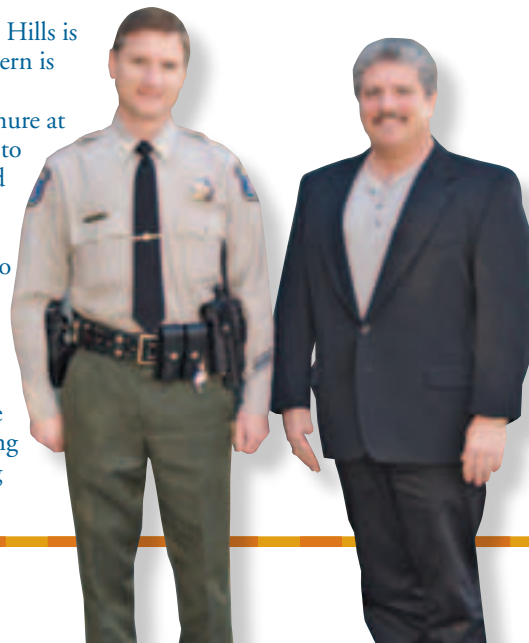
Like Calderone before him, Captain Neusel will soon become a familiar face to residents through CERT training, community events, and town hall meetings. Neusel encourages residents to contact the Sheriff's office with any safety concern. "Never hesitate to call. There is no such thing as a stupid request," he emphasizes.

A concern might be an unidentified vehicle in the neighborhood or a strange noise on your property. After crimes, people often remember sensing something suspicious. The advice: just report it.

As a "beat" for an officer, Los Altos Hills is relatively quiet. The number one concern is bicycle traffic safety.

Calderone retires after a 31-year tenure at the Sheriff's Office. He looks forward to spending time working on his cars and home.

Captain Neusel spent most of his youth in the West San Jose - Cupertino area and earned a degree in history from San Jose State. He heads the West Valley Division of the Office of the Sheriff of Santa Clara County, where he has worked for 13 years. The division employs 70 deputies, providing 24-hour patrol services for contracting cities.



## Fire Chief Waldvogel Retires

Fire Chief Kenneth Waldvogel has retired after over 40 years of continuous service.

He led the Santa Clara County Fire Department (SCCFD) for over four years. The Los Altos Hills County Fire District contracts with the SCCFD for provision of fire services.

Under Chief Waldvogel's leadership, the department attained prestigious Accredited Agency status from the Commission on Fire Accreditation International.

The Los Altos Hills County Fire District introduced and implemented many of the Chief's recommendations, including AutoPulse CPR machines, large animal rescue equipment, and the Personal and Senior Emergency Services training, which several hundred Town residents have completed.







# HIDDEN VILLA

## *A Gem in Our Own Backyard*

**H**ave you ever had the chance to milk a cow or to meet a sheep? When is the last time you hiked up to see the view from Black Mountain, or felt the cool waters of Adobe Creek? Do you ever wonder what it would be like to make your own cheese, or talk to your local farmers, or even “meet your meat?” These are just a few of the experiences that you can have while visiting our regional gem, Hidden Villa.

Nestled in our own backyard, Hidden Villa offers over eight miles of hiking trails, verdant pastures, vernal creeks, a beautiful educational garden, the oldest hostel on the West Coast, and a barnyard of farm animals.

### **Camps, CSA enrolling now**

The roots of the beautiful atmosphere and connection to the land lay in the Duveneck family-inspired mission “to inspire a just and sustainable future through our programs, land, and legacy.” This explains Hidden Villa’s focus on education, including a wide range of programs for the entire community. Offerings include summer camps, workshops, activities in the arts, humanities, and environmental education for diverse cultures and ages. Many of the camps are currently enrolling for the summer session.

Hidden Villa’s organic farm produces delicious crops right in our community. You can sign up to receive organic vegetables through the farm’s community supported agriculture (CSA) program. The CSA provides locally grown, farm-fresh produce from mid-May to Thanksgiving at three pick-up locations in the area. For more information on the CSA, or to view and enroll in Hidden Villa’s summer camps and classes, call 650-949-8650 or go online to [www.hiddenvilla.org](http://www.hiddenvilla.org).

### **Supporting Hidden Villa**

Hidden Villa is powered in part by volunteers and donations from the community. To learn more about volunteer opportunities across virtually every one of Hidden Villa’s departments and programs, call 650-949-8652 or email [volunteers@hiddenvilla.org](mailto:volunteers@hiddenvilla.org).

This is also an excellent time to support Hidden Villa through a financial donation, thanks to a matching challenge made possible by the Morgan Family Foundation. The Foundation will match up to \$65,000 in donations from the community. And to help encourage new donors, \$25,000 of the match must come from new or increased donor support. Hidden Villa appreciates your support!

Be sure to stop by the farm and enjoy a visit. Hidden Villa is located at 26870 Moody Road in Los Altos Hills or on the web at [www.hiddenvilla.org](http://www.hiddenvilla.org)

Learn more about Hidden Villa’s founders at the Los Altos History Museum through June 26, 2011. The exhibit *Touching Lives: The Duvenecks of Hidden Villa* chronicles the couple’s legacy of social and environmental activism.





# Exciting New Classes

The Los Altos Hills Parks and Recreation Committee and staff work hard to bring diverse, vibrant recreational opportunities to the Los Altos Hills community. In addition to such traditional offerings as the world-class equestrian program at Westwind Community Barn and yoga and pilates classes at Town Hall, a number of exciting new classes are currently available:

- **Peninsula Children's Choir and Vocal Camp**

Choir Director David Belles teaches choral, vocal, and instrumental music at Bullis Charter School. He directs many youth music programs in the Bay Area and graduated with honors in piano performance with a music teaching credential.

- **Ohlone Camp at Byrne Preserve**

This unique, active outdoor half-day camp teaches children about Ohlone culture. Campers will learn about the history of the land, wildlife, and local environment.

- **Touch of the Earth Nature Camp with Keith Gutierrez**

Keith Gutierrez has been teaching nature programs to kids in the Bay Area for over thirty years. "Ranger Keith" is a gifted and engaging teacher who previously led the Redwood Grove nature camp program in Los Altos.

- **Creating a Sustainable Future with Sister Santussika**

Sister Santussika has a Master of Divinity degree. Her class on spiritual development and environmental action will develop strength and clarity to empower your action.

- **Green Bean Kidz with Ellen Gibson**

Green Bean Kidz will be taught by Ellen Gibson, a Los Altos Hills native with a mission to get kids outdoors and engaged with nature.

- **Stepping Strong from Lifelong Fitness Alliance**

A 10-week walking and wellness program that encourages participants to improve their overall health through peer support and goal setting.

A complete listing of classes, times, and locations can be found in the Los Altos Hills Parks and Recreation Activity Guide, which is mailed to all households in Town in February and September. Please contact the Parks and Recreation office with any questions or to register at 650-947-2506. You can also get additional information on the web: [www.losaltoshills.ca.gov/parks-and-recreation/activity-guide](http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov/parks-and-recreation/activity-guide).





# Saddle Up, Partner

**L**os Altos Hills Parks and Recreation riding programs gallop into a new year by offering a plethora of classes. In addition to its flagship Summer Riding Camps and Year 'Round Riding Program, LAH Parks and Recreation has structured two new programs to attract the nascent rider—Mommy and Me, and Integrated Horsemanship.

**Mommy and Me (and Daddy too)** introduces the young equestrian (age 3-5) to the magical and wonderful world of horses. This is a great way to have fun with your child while meeting new friends and neighbors with children of similar ages. **Integrated Horsemanship** introduces novice and beginning riders to the world of horses as experienced and understood by the horse. This seminar integrates traditional and natural horsemanship, allowing for a day of riding and exploration.

Young riders interested in participating in comprehensive horsemanship and fun competition may want to consider joining **Pacific Ridge Pony Club**, based at Westwind Community Barn. Regional competitions are held in numerous disciplines, including games, dressage, eventing, and show jumping.

On March 26, Pony Club will be hosting the Middle California Region Quiz Rally, testing competitors on horse knowledge. To learn more, please contact Margaret Mock, [gobears99a@yahoo.com](mailto:gobears99a@yahoo.com) or visit [www.pacificridge.ponyclub.org/](http://www.pacificridge.ponyclub.org/).

**Westwind 4-H** provides horse riding lessons to children with physical handicaps. Riding sessions during fall, winter, and spring are held on Monday and Thursday afternoons from 4:00 – 5:00 pm. In July, riding sessions are held on Monday evenings. To learn more, call 650-947-8680 or visit the 4-H website at [www.westwind4h.org](http://www.westwind4h.org).





## PATHWAYS RUN/WALK TURNS 10

**T**his year, a local institution turns 10—the Pathways Run/Walk has come a long way in the decade since its inception. Race Director Scott Vanderlip, a long-time Los Altos Hills resident and avid runner, originally conceived of the race as a community-building event meant to highlight the natural beauty of our Town and its pathway system.

"The Run has grown and evolved over the years," said Vanderlip. "It's less about competition and more about getting out and really enjoying the trails and outdoors with your neighbors. The Pathways Run is intended for the whole community, not just hardcore runners." The number of race participants has more than tripled since the first running, thanks in part to Town participation and support.

This year's race will feature a 1960s theme and the slogan "Love to Run." The Run/Walk promises to be a groovy good time with special events and prizes on a day devoted to celebrating our community. So come join your neighbors as they boogie down the trails of Los Altos Hills—1960s attire is encouraged. These events are open to runners and walkers of any age. Water stations, race numbers, themed t-shirts, unique awards, and snacks will be provided. Group registration and discounts available.

The 10th Annual Los Altos Hills Pathways 5K, 10K, and 1-Mile Run/Walk gets underway on Saturday, May 7. The 10K begins at 9:00 am; the 5K at 9:15 am; and the 1-Mile Run/Walk at 10:30 am. All events start and finish at Westwind Community Barn, 27210 Altamont Road.

For more information, or to become a race sponsor or volunteer, please contact Sarah Gualtieri at 650-947-2518, [sgualtieri@losaltoshills.ca.gov](mailto:sgualtieri@losaltoshills.ca.gov), or Race Director Scott Vanderlip at 650-948-6455, [scott@inet-sciences.com](mailto:scott@inet-sciences.com). Race information and online registration are available on the event website: [www.lahpathwaysrun.org](http://www.lahpathwaysrun.org).



# Amateur Radio to the Rescue

**W**hen a disaster knocks out regular communication channels, ARES members get to their radios. ARES stands for “amateur radio emergency service,” a group of trained and licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment for communication duty in public service when disaster strikes.

“Amateur radio” refers to licensed use of designated radio bands, for both private recreation and community service purposes. Amateur radio operators are informally called hams, a term originating in the 1920s. Ham communications are intended to be complementary to the normal telephone, cell phone, and Internet channels.

The ARES volunteers in the Town of Los Altos Hills are organized under the Emergency Communications Committee. The committee, chaired by Ray Egan, presently consists of 17 council-appointed full members and a number of associate members. The Emergency Communications Committee is tasked with providing radio communication services between several organizations and individuals in an emergency when other communication channels fail.

Experience from major disasters has shown that telephone, cell phone, and Internet channels may become either unusable or overloaded as a result of a major earthquake, flood, or fire. Disasters caused by man can also lead to a breakdown in communications,

as was evidenced by the 9/11 tragedy.

In order to properly prepare

for emergencies, the committee members check in weekly in a countywide community communication network. They also take part in quarterly countywide simulated emergency drills, including fieldwork. ARES volunteers also participate in local training events

organized by the Town’s

Emergency Manager and staff in conjunction with the CERT committee members.

ARES operators use federally sanctioned amateur radio operating frequencies in accordance with federally mandated amateur radio operating requirements and procedures.

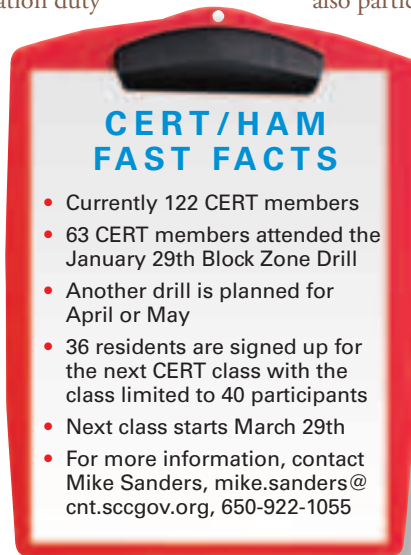
ARES volunteers provide an essential service to the community. This is a significant time commitment by volunteers for the good of all residents. The committee meets monthly every third Tuesday at 7:00 pm in City Council chambers. Additional ham volunteers would be welcomed. Interested Town residents are also welcome to attend committee

meetings. To learn more, visit [www.losaltoshills.ca.gov/emergency-communications-committee](http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov/emergency-communications-committee).

*Volunteer ham radio operators, Edwin Jones (left) and Ray Egan, train regularly to prepare for back-up communication duty in a disaster situation.*

## CERT/HAM FAST FACTS

- Currently 122 CERT members
- 63 CERT members attended the January 29th Block Zone Drill
- Another drill is planned for April or May
- 36 residents are signed up for the next CERT class with the class limited to 40 participants
- Next class starts March 29th
- For more information, contact Mike Sanders, [mike.sanders@cnt.sccgov.org](mailto:mike.sanders@cnt.sccgov.org), 650-922-1055





## Gardner Grizzlies Roar into Third Year

**G**ardner Bullis School, the Los Altos School District's elementary school in Los Altos Hills, is thriving in its third year. The school, located on Fremont Road, opened in the fall of 2008 with 202 students. Today it has 295 students in kindergarten through sixth grade.

"Gardner Bullis School has built a warm and friendly community where our students can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally, while learning to be happy and productive adults," said Principal Erica Gilbert.

The school's strong academic program begins with all-day kindergarten, which has 48 students enrolled this year. In addition to the core academic subjects, students receive instruction in physical education, music, drama, and art. Some of these programs are funded by the Los Altos Educational Foundation, which raises money for district-wide programs, and by the Gardner Bullis PTA.

Gardner Bullis focuses on educating the whole child, this year implementing a character education program called Project Cornerstone. Through book readings and guided discussions, students learn

to respect others, stand up for themselves, and combat bullying. A six-week parent workshop is also part of the program.

Students both benefit from community support and contribute to the community. Last spring's fund-raising auction, which sold items donated by the school community and about 100 local businesses, raised more than \$100,000 for the PTA. This fall's Walkathon raised more than \$35,000.

This holiday season, students brought in 120 gifts for the Family Giving Tree, fulfilling wishes that ranged from scooters to pink dresses. Students also brought in 140 Halloween costumes and helped sort them for donation to Sunday Friends, a group that works with low-income families in San Jose. And they collected about 400 articles of clothing to be distributed at the Day Worker Center of Mountain View.

About half the school's students, representing more than 100 families, are from Los Altos Hills. Gardner Bullis is also open to Los Altos Hills residents who live in the Palo Alto Unified School District.



## Leadership Training in the Classroom

**B**ullis Charter School (BCS) is embarking on a journey that will take its middle schoolers to a new level of community and personal leadership development. KidLead, an executive-level leadership training course designed specifically for 10 to 13 year olds, will be introduced to BCS seventh-grade students beginning in February. The KidLead curriculum focuses on the 16 most important leadership qualities desired in leaders, based on research done by Dr. Alan E. Nelson.

A typical KidLead session involves a team of students working together in rotating roles to develop constructive, strategic solutions in a variety of activities. Each team's success depends greatly on the "team leader" responsible for leading his or her peers through

a given activity. Adult "koaches" encourage each exercise leader to strategize, communicate with team members, shift gears as needed, evaluate progress, and improve efficiency with each activity. After the activity is completed, the "koach" facilitates group discussion designed to provide students with an opportunity to reflect on what it takes to be an effective leader.

BCS is one of the first public schools in California to implement this program, which is a natural next step in the character and competency skill-building already present

in the school's K-6 Character Development program. KidLead continues to develop these skills in addition to expanding others, such as ethics, strategy, vision, power, and change.

"We are thrilled to bring this innovative curriculum to Bullis Charter School," said Nadja Jackson, BCS parent and KidLead trainer. "In the introductory workshop we conducted in January, we saw significant improvement in leadership skills in just a few hours. We expect that students, parents, and teachers will all see a positive shift in these students, turning leadership potential into reality." Incoming seventh-grade student J.D. Medlin feels "honored" to be able to participate in the program next year. "My father was really impressed because they are trying to teach the same skills to adults at his business."







## The Poisoning of Wildlife



### CAUSE FOR ALARM

**T**he Los Altos Hills County Fire District would like to remind residents that a new law was passed last year that will come into effect July



1, 2011. On that date, almost all homes in Town must be equipped with a carbon monoxide detector. The law applies to any single-family residence that uses gas, oil, or wood anywhere as a fuel source, or has an attached garage.

These detectors must be battery powered, or have battery backup if they are of the plug-in type, and be certified by a national testing laboratory such as Underwriters Lab.

Some homes may already have smoke detectors installed that are combined with a carbon monoxide detector. In this case, in addition to the above requirements, detection of carbon monoxide must sound an alarm that is different from that of the smoke detector.

For more information, contact Santa Clara County Fire at 800-800-1793.

**A** silent, man-made epidemic is taking a toll on our community's wildlife. A recent *San Francisco Chronicle* article titled "Owls eat poisoned rats, suffer gruesome deaths" points out the disturbing fact that people are unwittingly poisoning owls and other wildlife in the name of fighting rats.

Owls, hawks, vultures, and other raptors, which are the natural predators of small rodents, are gradually disappearing—poisoned by rodenticides. These super-toxic rat poisons are having a ripple effect in the ecosystem. Many products claim that one dose is all that is needed to kill a rodent, but the rodent may take up to a week to die as it progressively becomes weaker, leaving time for a predator to find it.

In 2006, the LAH Open Space Committee sponsored an educational forum on rats and how to control them. You can view the discussion by three experts at this link: <http://www.friendsofthehills.org/information/OhRats.htm>.

There are pest control companies in our area that will help control the rats in your house through "exclusion and trapping" without endangering wildlife. The simple snap trap turns out to be one of the best traps.

As Michael Fry, a wildlife toxicologist and pesticide expert with the American Bird Conservancy, points out in the *Chronicle* article, "If the rat is carrying 10 or 15 times a lethal dose, the animal that consumes it is at a much higher risk of consuming a lethal dose."

Before embarking on a rat bait program, please consider the damage to the environment and to our raptor population.

## Environmental Design Committee Needs Volunteers

**T**he Environmental Design and Protection Committee of Los Altos Hills is seeking new members. One of the original volunteer committees set up by the Town, committee members are charged "to work for the beautification of the Town, to identify sources of pollution, and to review and inspect plantings."

The committee works closely with the Planning Department, visiting monthly the sites of all new work in the Town — new houses, remodels, and landscaping — and one committee member is present at the subsequent site development meeting with the applicant.

The committee is looking for people who want to be part of a group conserving the natural beauty of Los Altos Hills. Applicants should be willing and able to give up to five hours of their time per month to interesting and varied work that really does make a difference to the Town.

For more information, contact Pat Ley at 650-941-1674, [ley.pat@gmail.com](mailto:ley.pat@gmail.com).





**TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS**  
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#### Town Newsletter Statement of Purpose

This is the official Town newsletter to communicate current issues, services, and activities in Los Altos Hills to the residents of the Town — to facilitate, encourage, and improve interaction between the residents and the Town government. The newsletter is published quarterly. **Deadline for the next issue is April 1, 2011.**

Printed with soy-based inks. International Paper, the manufacturer of the paper, has earned Sustainable Forestry Initiative and Forestry Stewardship Council dual certification.

[www.losaltoshills.ca.gov](http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov)

#### Our Town

The Town newsletter is published with assistance from the Town Volunteer Committees.

Editor: Dorothy Duffy Price

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Community Services Coordinator: Sarah Gualtieri

#### Los Altos Hills City Council

Ginger Summit, Mayor

Rich Larsen, Mayor Pro Tem

Jean Mordo

John Radford

Gary Waldeck

# CALENDAR

## April 10

**Sunday, 11:00 am – 4:00 pm**

### Horse Training

LAHHA will host Bruce Griffin Sr. at the Town Riding Ring. Cost is \$35, \$25 for LAHHA members. Contact Deb Goldeen, [palamino@pacbell.net](mailto:palamino@pacbell.net).

## 17

**Sunday, 1:00 – 4:00 pm**

### Earth Day Celebration

Make Earth Day everyday! Bring cash for the Farmer's Market, Los Altos Hills hats, wine glasses, reusable bags, and much more. Much-loved wildcat



show and reptile display will be featured. Contact 650-947-2518.



## 17

**Sunday, 3:00 – 6:00 pm**

### Art Show Reception

Los Altos artist Jan Meyer will exhibit recent paintings from her "Rooms, Blooms..." series through September at Town Hall. Contact Karen Druker, 650-941-8073.

## 23

**Sat, 9:00 – 11:00 am**

### Hoppin' Hounds Easter Biscuit Hunt

Bring your dogs to Byrne Preserve for this on-leash biscuit hunt benefiting

Palo Alto Animal Services shelter. \$5 donation requested. Contact 650-947-2518.

## May 1

**Sunday, 9:00 am**

### LAHHA Annual Horse PlayDay

All games are for riders on horseback. Contestants pay a small fee per game. Contact Kathy Evans, [EvansASE@aol.com](mailto:EvansASE@aol.com).

## 7

**Saturday, 9:00 am**  
**10th Annual Pathways Run/Walk**

See story on page 11. To register, or for more information, visit [www.lahpathwaysrun.org](http://www.lahpathwaysrun.org).

## 20

**Friday, 7:30 – 10:00 pm**

### Friday Night Live

Los Altos Hills Youth Commission invites you to attend a night of live music at the LAYC Hall. Free admission. Contact 650-947-2518.

## 28

**Sat, 10:30 am – Noon**

### Sudden Oak Death

#### "S.O.D. BLITZ"

The Open Space Committee is sponsoring the Third Annual SOD Blitz at Town Hall. Opportunity for free Sudden Oak Death testing. Contact [sodblitz09@earthlink.net](mailto:sodblitz09@earthlink.net).



## June 5

**Sunday, 1:00 – 4:30 pm**

### 14th Annual Town Picnic

Purissima Park. Open to all residents of Los Altos Hills. Residents must make reservations to attend. Look for a flier in May with more information.

Calendar events are also posted on Town's website: [www.losaltoshills.ca.gov](http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov)

